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My Note Book.

Leonato.—Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
Don John.—Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
 —*Much Ado About Nothing.*



THE agreeable features of the gentleman whose portrait is presented above are those of Benjamin Constant, the French artist, who is best known in this country by his highly decorative canvases of black-eyed houris swathed in bright-hued fabrics of richly contrasted textures, luxuriously ensconced between downy cushions in gorgeous harems, all vacuously handsome and uniformly busy in doing nothing at all. As announced recently in My Note-Book, Mr. Constant is to visit us in the autumn, under the auspices of Messrs. Boussod, Valadon & Co., when he will paint portraits of certain especially favored Americans, who, however, it is to be borne in mind, are on no account to exceed six in number. Recently Mr. Constant has set Paris talking by his defence of the posthumously acquired celebrity of Victor Hugo as an artist—graphic, not literary. A collection of the drawings, chiefly in pen and ink, of the great author of “*Les Misérables*,” has been brought together, and there has been quite a fierce controversy about them. Some years ago, it may be remembered, The Art Amateur reproduced from L’Art, where they were originally published, a page of these startling products of a vivid, not to say fantastic, imagination. The circumstance may be recalled that the starting-point of most of the “pictures” was an accidental blot on the author’s manuscript and from this he was wont lazily to evolve one of his eccentric compositions. Could he revisit the glimpses of the moon, probably no one would be more surprised than himself at the fuss that is being made over these little accidents of genius, which in his lifetime could hardly be said to have attracted much attention, although, as I have said, they were reproduced in fac-simile in L’Art, the great French art journal.

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BENJAMIN CONSTANT, however, is not of those cold-blooded critics who hold these roughly executed sketches of imaginary scenes unworthy of serious notice. On the contrary he may almost be said to go into ecstasies over them. It is quite true that many of them testify plainly to the genius of the man who dashed them off in the intervals of literary work, and Mr. Constant is right in calling attention to the admirable effect of the “*Corner of a Rampart*,” with its view of a dilapidated fortress of the Middle Ages and of the distant valley of the Rhine. Victor Hugo’s “*Crowing Cock*” he holds worthy of Rembrandt or of Millet. In the drawing called “*Stormy Weather*,” “the clouds burst with rain;” a great forked lightning flash shivers like a splintered lance against the stockade of some fortification and a life-boat puts off through the mingled rain and spray. In “*The City of the Cross*,” a bridge falling apart stone by stone, “a bridge such as offers itself to the victim of a nightmare when he stifles and dreams himself pursued by some enemy,” leads across a lake to a ruined city reflected in the still waters. At the entrance is a cross, a chef d’œuvre of Gothic art,

“which one might believe to have been designed by a silversmith of the thirteenth century.” The very titles of some of the sketches display Hugo’s invention. There is “*Gavroche rêveur*,” “*Vocation veillant sur elle-même*,” and a “*Bourgeois naufragé devenu roi chez les sauvages*.” Mr. Constant, summing up, says that Géricault or Delacroix might have been proud to sign several of these fantasies, and Gustave Doré, at his wildest and best, falls distinctly below them.

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OCCASIONAL differences of opinion between artists and critics seem to be taken more seriously in France than in this country. M. Habert having made in print a disparaging notice of a picture by M. Felix Dupuis, the latter sent him the customary “two friends” to demand retraction or “satisfaction.” No retraction being forthcoming, a hostile meeting, with two exchanges of shots at twenty-five paces, was promptly arranged for the next Sunday morning, and the fiery artist fell dead at the first fire, his opponent, with the usual good fortune of honest and fearless critics, escaping unharmed. The unfortunate victim of his own indiscretion was an industrious but not brilliant painter, and deserved a happier fate, though it would seem that a man of fifty-five, even in France, should have known better than to seek to answer criticism in this desperate fashion.

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A CANVAS entitled “*Christ before Pilate*”—which I judge to have been the original study for Munkacsy’s big picture, for which Mr. Wanamaker is supposed to have paid \$100,000—was recently sold at auction at Christie’s for about \$5000. This probably was the picture which was advertised in London as the “*Christ before Pilate*” simultaneously with the exhibition in New York of the big picture of that name. Among other pictures sold at Christie’s at the same time were Rosa Bonheur’s “*Ploughing in Nivernais*,” a variation of the picture of the same title in the Luxembourg Gallery, which brought about \$22,000; Troyon’s “*Ferry Boat*,” \$18,000; “*The Harrow*,” by the same master, \$6600. Two sketches by Troyon, “*Rentrée*” and “*l’Abreuvoir*,” brought respectively \$2572 and \$2940. Fortuny’s “*Espada*” sold for \$2850.

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“AN HOUR with Dumas,” in The Critic of June 2d, gives the views of the author of “*La Dame aux Camélias*” on many topics—on Americans among them. Listen to the following: Has it not the true ring of Parisian insolence?

“‘And don’t you find the efforts of that young race interesting?’ ‘Americans?’ he asked; ‘they are very adaptable.’ ‘More than that, Monsieur. See their progress in art.’ ‘Art, of course; they found it was necessary to have pictures, so they bought some—the bigger the better! They have no originality. They owe everything they have done to other nations; that’s why they have never produced a genius.’”

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IT is hardly possible to discuss calmly the action of the Democratic caucus in striking works of art off the free list as they stood in the Mills Tariff Bill. After all that has been done by enlightened Americans, from the President down, to remove from the country the reproach of taxing imported works of art, everything is upset once more at the mere bidding, apparently, of one pig-headed Philadelphian, Thomas Donaldson by name. This energetic gentleman really seems to have no other reason for living than to thwart the wish of his more intelligent fellow-citizens to have this barbarian tax removed. It was he who had the ten per cent duty raised to thirty per cent, and it is reported that he now threatens to have it increased to fifty per cent unless the present agitation ceases. He is a monomaniac, or, in the language of the day, a “crank,” on the entire subject. It was my fate to be seated by him at a banquet in Philadelphia two or three years ago, and although on the occasion we were all assembled as the guests of a distinguished English actor, who was temporarily in the country, and the tariff question could not be said to have the remotest connection with the object of our gathering, it was impossible to escape from Mr. Donaldson’s views as to the expediency of protecting the works of American artists. The fact that all American artists of standing scornfully repudiate the notion that they need protection, does not cause him to abate one jot of his odious zeal. All the worse for them, he would probably answer. You might remind him that of the 1281 American artists who were invited by circular to express their view on the subject, 1197 were in favor of free art, but it would make no impression on him. He would say paintings are a luxury for the rich, and therefore should be taxed. You might

urge that with an annual surplus revenue of many millions of dollars over the actual needs of the Government, it is folly to shut out from the country foreign works of art which should be welcomed as among the best means of educating our own painters. He would actually tell you that our painters would be better off if left to their own devices. As to sending young Americans to Europe to study art, he is quite opposed to such an idea. It spoils them, he says. Tell him that the strongest of the American painters are those who have been educated abroad free of cost in the studios of artists whose pictures are now taxed on coming into this country, and he will reply that in his opinion the best American painters are those who have never studied abroad. What can you do with such a man? He assured me with great glee that he had made clippings from articles in The Art Amateur favoring the abolition of the tax on art, and had used them in his “arguments” for high tariff on foreign paintings. He is the sort of man who would prove to you by the Bible that the devil was the author of the universe.

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AT the time I speak of, Mr. Donaldson was in Congress, and devoting himself, to the exclusion of every other idea, apparently, to “protecting” American artists, despite their protests that they wanted no protection. With his dry persistence he found little difficulty in getting his views accepted by the Committee on Tariff Revision, the majority of whom neither knew nor cared anything about the bearings of the subject in relation to art. Mr. Perry Belmont tried to defeat Mr. Donaldson’s machinations; but in vain. He only strengthened his position; for the unscrupulous Pennsylvanian pointed to him as the son of a rich New Yorker, personally interested in the abolition of the tariff on works of art, so that he might buy paintings for his own gallery as cheaply as possible. At the present time, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Donaldson is not in Congress, but he still finds it his mission to “protect” the interests of American artists. Apparently, there is no one powerful enough in the country to protect American artists from the officious and objectionable Mr. Donaldson.

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THE New York World, which has been doing good work by publishing interviews, to show how strong is the feeling of the cultivated public against the tax on art, urges that, to be consistent, Congress should also tax music. “Music is a branch of art,” says the editor. “Musicians often carry tunes across the ocean in their head, and not only play them here on instruments, but sometimes actually write them out for other people. No performance of foreign melodies should be permitted except those covered by the lucid Treasury ruling on other art. That is, all composed before the year 1800 should be admitted free, but all later productions made to pay liberally or not suffered to land. Thirty per cent of the gross receipts of opera-houses producing foreign music should be collected by the revenue officers. Opera and concerts are luxuries and call for taxation. American tunes also need protection. To encourage American music, all other music should be kept out of the country as much as possible—just as is the case with other art.”

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AT Cottier’s, recently, I was shown a remarkable Constable and one of the most interesting Monticellis I have seen. The former, powerful even for Constable, and superb in color, represents “*A Lock*,” with a foreground of water darkened by the reflected shadow of an umbrageous and gigantic beech to the left of the canvas, and that of an old oak to the right. These majestic trees spread out their branches, forming an arch, and framing a sweet sylvan background apparently of great depth. The Monticelli, which is almost coherent in subject—no common quality in the late works of that erratic painter—is a rich though low-toned twilight scene representing the meeting of ladies and cavaliers, seemingly outside the gates of a park. The figure of a gentleman on a white horse, accompanied by a grande dame in a gold-embroidered robe, can best be made out, and behind them are what appear to be dismounted men-at-arms, one of whom carries a red flag.

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IT is gratifying to know that the war which the Paris police have begun against counterfeiters of works of art is being carried on with good results. They have lately brought to justice a lot of bric-à-brac dealers who have been selling modern German imitations for old French silverware. The imitations, it is said, have been very clumsy, but with the aid of marks cut from real old pieces

of little value, the brocanteurs appear to have had little difficulty in deceiving their customers. They even went so far as to give written guarantees of the genuineness of their wares, which, of course, made it the easier to convict them. Their names and fines are as follows: Rosenau and Levy, 3000 francs each; Lang and Heft, 2000 each; Colonne (a woman), 1000 francs.

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THE great picture sale of the season at Paris was that of the Goldschmidt collection in the Rue Sèze. Troyon's chef-d'œuvre, the "Vallée de la Toucque," which had been purchased after its exhibition at the Salon of 1853 for 10,000 francs, passed to Mr. Bischoffsheim for 175,000 fr., the highest price ever paid in France for a modern picture, the next highest being 160,000 fr. for Millet's "Angelus" at the Wilson sale and 128,000 fr. paid for Meissonier's "1814" at the Defoer sale. The "Barriere," another Troyon preferred by some to the larger "Vallée de la Toucque," went for 101,000 fr. to Mr. Arnold. "The Watering Place, Morning," which had been sold for 2200 fr. in 1857, went to Mr. Bagne for 35,000 fr. "Oaks and Wild Roses" sold for 16,000 fr. to M. Montgermont. It had cost but 2000 fr. in 1858.

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THE Goldschmidt collection included twenty-four examples of Decamps. Of these, the "Farm Yard" went for 30,400 fr. to Mr. Blumenthal; an "Italian Peasant Lighting his Pipe" to Mr. Herz for 12,000 fr., and "The Cat, the Rabbit and the Weasel" to Mr. Montaigne for 10,000 fr. The "Fox Hunt" cost M. Paulme 12,000 fr. The Louvre Museum paid 16,600 fr. for a "Bulldog and Scotch Terrier," a purchase the wisdom of which has been sharply questioned, as Decamps's specialty was not animal painting, and there were better examples in the collection, which might have been secured. M. Augotin bought a "Diogenes" for 5600 fr.; a "Holy Family" for 9000 fr., an "Italian Landscape with Ruins" for 5100 fr. and "Little Mendicants" for 5000 fr.

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THE ten Delacroix which were in the sale brought good but not extraordinary prices. "Herminie and the Shepherds" went to 25,400 fr., Mr. Porto Riche being the buyer. An "Onset of Arab Cavaliers" brought but 7600 fr. The "Players" brought 12,200 fr.; the "Coasts of Morocco," an important work which had had a place in the exhibition of the Hundred Chef d'œuvres, went to Mr. Tanien for 50,000 fr. A "Greek Cavalier" brought 9900 fr. The "Christ on the Cross," which had sold for 29,000 fr. at the Laurent-Richard sale, brought only 15,600 fr. Mr. Knoedler bought for 29,100 fr. "The Abduction of Rebecca." This is an important addition to the already remarkable number of noted works by Delacroix in this country. In the possession of a single New York dealer are half a dozen first-class examples, including the famous "Convulsionnaires de Tangiers," a painting which, even if every other canvas of the master were destroyed, would justify his reputation as one of the greatest colorists that ever lived.

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OF works by other noted artists at the Goldschmidt sale, Ziem's "Venice at Sunset" brought 26,200 fr.; a small Theodore Rousseau, 19x26 centimetres, "The River," brought 25,000 fr.; Meissonier's "The Doctor" went to Mr. Lebaudy for 17,000 fr. The "Windmill," by Jules Dupré, sold for 20,100 fr.; his "Deer in Forest," 10,700 fr., to Prince Basilewski; a small study by Corot, "Château de Fontainebleau," brought 6000 fr.; and an unimportant Géricault went to M. Fournier for 8500 fr.

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AT the sale of the Clémenceau collection, the principal prices were: "Pré des Graves," the last picture painted by Daubigny, 8050 fr.; the "Village Square," by Corot, a small picture, 9550 fr., and a study of a "Sunset" by the same, 2700 fr.; an "Interior of a Sheepfold," by Ch. Jacque, 3400 fr.; two still-life subjects by Vollon, 2705 fr. and 1705 fr.; and a study by Ziem, "Entrance of the Grand Canal, Venice," 1230 fr.

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SOME first proofs of bronzes by Barye were sold at the Delbergue-Cormont sale at the Hotel Drouot, March 26th. A "Lion and Tiger Walking" brought 3600 fr. A small "Lion with Raised Paw" brought 510 fr.; another from the same model, 500 fr., and another small lion, at rest, 570 fr. A "Lion Devouring a Gazelle"

went to 1005 fr. A "Cayman and Serpent Interlaced" brought 2500 fr., and a "Combat between an Arab and a Lion," 1000 fr. Of the smaller bronzes, a little group of a ram, sheep and lamb brought 245 fr.; a deer, 130 fr.; a "Stork with Tortoise," 200 fr.; a "Rabbit with Ears Erect," 80 fr., and another cast of the same, 65 fr. Two small plaques, a deer and an eagle, brought respectively 55 and 60 fr. The smallest price was given for a little group of two tortoises, which went for 54 fr.

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THE first day's sale of the Goupil collection produced 99,781 fr. The marble bust attributed to Mino da Fiesole was bought for the Museum of Lyons for 12,500 fr., and the bas-relief of the Virgin in terra-cotta, attributed to Antonio Rossellino, went to the same museum for 4700 fr. The two pieces of sculpture had occupied positions in M. Goupil's bedchamber. Of others, a statuette of a monk, in wood, attributed to Alonzo Cano, brought 4650 fr. A wax copy of Paul Dubois's "Chanteur Florentin" went for 1000 fr. It had been bought for 1225 fr. Another wax, tinted, by Fremiet, a "Faun and his Young Ones," brought 1000 fr.; a statuette in wax by Mercie, "David," 1250 fr. An early proof of Barye's "Lion and Tiger Walking" went to 3500 fr., having been put up at 3000. This appears to be the same group a proof of which brought at the Delbergue-Cormont sale 3600 fr.

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AMONG the pictures, David's portrait of Ingres as a youth, offered at 2000 fr., brought 3000 fr.; "Huzzars Charging Cossacks," by Detaille, brought 3000 fr.; a study by Fortuny, "The Collector," went for 1500 fr.; a "Head of a Young Girl," by Jacquet, 1500 fr.; and fourteen drawings by Ingres, portraits of women mostly, brought very good prices, the drawing of Mlle. de Montgolfier, which sold at the Alfred Stevens' sale for 500 fr., going to 2700 fr., and others reaching prices double or treble those at which they were set up. Some idea of the enthusiasm of the bidders may be gained from the fact that an "Annunciation to the Shepherds," catalogued as belonging to the Venetian school, without attribution to any particular painter, mounted by bids of 100 fr. from 400 fr., the upset price, to 4000 fr.

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THE Moniteur des Arts objects, not without some reason, to the strictures of Mr. Stead, of The Pall Mall Gazette, on the nudities at the Salon. Mr. Stead, as is well known, is hardly in a position to throw stones. He has, besides, laid himself open to ridicule by praising in extravagant terms a chance likeness to Mr. Gladstone, which he has discovered in one of the works which seemed to him sufficiently draped. One may imagine what a conflict of emotions there would be in Mr. Stead's bosom, if the figure like Mr. Gladstone had happened to be nude—say one of Maignan's "Voices of the Tocsin."

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PERHAPS to get even with Mr. Stead, the Moniteur finds several uncomplimentary things to say of Mr. Burne-Jones's Andromeda. The Perseus seems to the French critic to be dressed in a bathing suit, and the monster reminds him of the two driving wheels of a tricycle. Mr. Alma-Tadema's sketch for his much-talked-of "Heliogabalus" wins the somewhat ambiguous praise of being pronounced better than the finished picture.

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RECENTLY The North American Review and Lippincott's Magazine have each in a special issue far exceeded their normal circulation; the former by Mr. Gladstone's defence of orthodox Christianity, the latter by Miss Amélie Rives's contribution to neo-pagan erotica.

MONTEZUMA.

YANDELL'S SUMMER EXHIBITION.

THE exhibition of paintings by American and foreign artists that has been opened in Mr. Yandell's gallery, for the months of June, July and August, is more interesting than these midsummer shows are apt to be. A definite standard of good, rich color is well maintained throughout the majority of the hundred and thirty-four pictures exhibited; the high note is given by the Monticellis, of which there are no less than seven scattered through the collection, and this prodigal richness is somewhat more discreetly maintained by the examples—more or less satisfactory—of Rousseau, Daubigny, Jules Dupré, Diaz, Michel, Pasini, Crome, Sargent, Chase, George B. Butler, Bunce, Ryder and Homer Martin. At the extreme other

end of the color scale is Whistler's brilliant little water-color, "The Sea, Gray and Silver." The largest and most reasonable of the Monticellis is the "Garden of Beauty," in which the whites and grays of the figures at the left and the sumptuous reds of the lady in the foreground complete a harmony of glowing color that no one else could have carried out. The example attributed to Rousseau is a small landscape; the Daubigny is "Twilight Glow," from the collection of Mr. Evans; "The Coming Storm," by Jules Dupré, represents a tossing sea overshadowed by luminous greenish-gray clouds.

The "Fontainebleau," by Michel, is rather important and quite characteristic of that strong but much-mannered painter, and the little "Landscape" by Pasini is rich and sober in color. Of the Americans, Mr. Sargent is represented by a sketchy, spirited version of one of his alert and clever ladies, leaning on her elbow and favoring the spectator with a sidewise glance, and by the desirable little Venetian study that appeared at the last Academy exhibition and is in the possession of Mr. Stanford White. Mr. Chase sends several of his excellent landscapes and a most brilliant and courageous rendering of the substance and color of copper and brass, in a still-life study. Mr. Butler furnishes ten or eleven canvases, most of them of large size—his "Tambourine Player," which occupied the post of honor at one of the last Academy exhibitions; the "Boy with a Sling," the portrait of William M. Evarts; a life-size study of a "Capri Lace Maker" in a blue gown, which a well-painted green-glazed water-jar serves to set off; a "Venetian Girl," painted in a not unsuccessful imitation of the Venetian school, and which quite destroys the garish "Page," by Villegas, which hangs next it. Mr. Bunce reappears with a number of his familiar studies in oranges, yellows and yellowish greens; Mr. Ryder sends an "Old Bridge" and a long, mystical landscape on the sea-shore, which he calls "Fisherman's Rest, under the Cliff."

Somewhat in contrast with all these glowing tones are Mr. Weir's landscape studies, his one or two paintings of still-life and his two portraits, one of the young girl in black, against a tapestry background, which was seen at one of the Prize Fund Exhibitions, and that of the lady in white and pale yellow, which hung in the corridor of the last Academy. A large painting, representing a young lady and a little girl, with a great variety of other bric-à-brac, in a very "colorful" interior, by George Frederick Munn, hangs at the head of the room; there are several old paintings of the Italian schools, and the collection is completed by some hangings of tapestry and painted leather.

TALKS WITH EXPERTS.

IV.—DURAND-RUEL ON THE DIFFERENT PERIODS OF COROT, MILLET AND ROUSSEAU.

"It is wrong to class Corot with Rousseau and Millet," said M. Durand-Ruel, speaking of the French school of 1830, "as he was always different in manner, and, in fact, had but little in common with them, yet he, and Jules Dupré, also, are commonly spoken of as belonging to the Barbizon school, so called, although neither ever painted in Barbizon. It is true that Dupré often worked in company with Rousseau, but not, that I am aware, in Barbizon; and I ought to know."

In answer to a leading question, M. Durand-Ruel said: "Corot may be held to have had three well-marked periods: the first being that in which he was still under the influence of his old academical teacher Allegrez; the second, during and for a long while after his sojourn at Rome, when he worked much from nature, but was still influenced by his early teaching; and the third that which has made him famous, but which does not include all of his best work by any means."

"In what manner does the work of the second period differ from that of the other two?"

"Well, Corot's early works were careful, heavy, well drawn, elaborate, but without much feeling for nature. They were, in short, academical landscapes, such as all students were taught to do at the time; something in the manner of Poussin, you know, but without Poussin's genius, of course."

"But Corot did not do much in that way."

"No; he did not remain long under academical influence. At Rome he studied from nature. After returning he kept up that practice. He began to see the effect of light and atmosphere on form, and to feel that for a landscape painter that effect was the great thing to reproduce. He saw this before others; and while the